

Message Text

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43

ACTION NEA-10

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R 041315Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3119

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

USINT BAGHDAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L KUWAIT 2366

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, KU, FR

SUBJECT: EMIR OF KUWAIT'S VISIT TO FRANCE

REF: PARIS 13926

1. EMBASSY HAS DELAYED COMMENTING ON SUBJECT VISIT HOPING TO ELABORATE FURTHER FOLLOWING RETURN GOK PARTY FROM FRANCE ON EXCELLENT REPORT FROM EMBASSY PARIS (REFTEL). TO DATE WE HAVE LITTLE TO ADD. NO TRULY SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENTS APPEAR TO HAVE RESULTED FROM GOK/GOF EXCHANGE ALTHOUGH KUWAITI OFFICIALS TERM VISIT "HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL."

2. NO SENIOR FINANCE MINISTRY OFFICIALS ACCOMPANYING AMIR HAVE YET RETURNED TO KUWAIT. (MINFIN ATEEQI WENT DIRECTLY TO GENEVA, VIENNA AND, CURRENTLY, IS IN CAIRO). LOCAL FRENCH EMBASSY OFFICIAL HAS SAID FRENCH WOULD LIKE TO ENCOURAGE KUWAITI INVESTMENT IN THAT COUNTRY, BUT RELUCTANT TO MODIFY SUBSTANTIALLY FOREIGN INVESTMENT POLICIES TO FAVOR KUWAIT BECAUSE OF FEAR SUCH ACTION COULD LEAD TO GREATER US AND OTHER "UNDESIRABLE" FOREIGN INVESTMENT. AGREEMENT SIGNED WAS RELATED ONLY TO TEX TECHNICALITIES AND PROBABLY MEANINGLESS. DESPITE ATEEQI'S DESIRE TO SPEARD KUWAIT INVESTMENTS, SIGNIFICANT
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NEW KUWAITI INVESTMENT IN FRANCE UNLIKELY.

3. ANNOUNCEMENT BY ATEEQI AT PARIS PRESS CONFERENCE MAY 28 THAT GOK HAD AGREED TO PURCHASE ADDITIONAL FRECH ARMS ALSO APPARENTLY PREMATURE. DEFENSE MINISTER STOPPED ONLY BRIEFLY IN KUWAIT BEFORE PROCEEDING TO SUEZ CANAL OPENING CEREMONIES IN EGYPT. INDICATED TO HIS STAFF AND KHALID JAFFAR (AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE TO US) THAT VARIOUS FRENCH PROPOSALS WOULD BE FORTHCOMING BUT STAFF "UNIMPRESSED" BY FRENCH SUGGESTIONS WHICH INCLUDED AMX-30 ARMORED VEHICLE AND FAST COASTAL PATROL CRAFT/MISSILE WEAPONS SYSTEM. (UK EMBASSY UNDERSTANDS NO NEW SALES WERE MADE AND THAT, DESPITE EXPECTED VISIT SOON OF FRECH NAVY TEAM, KUWAIT WILL NOT BUY FRENCH PATROL CRAFT).

4. EMBASSY HAS NO INFO TO CONFIRM OR DENY LOCAL REPORTS AGREEMENT WAS REACHED TO PURCHASE A FRENCH-BUILT NUCLEAR REACTOR OR FOR KUWAIT TO INVEST IN EURODIF CONSORTIUM. FORMER SEEMS UNLIKELY, ALTHOUGH NUCLEAR TECHNICAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT POSSIBLE. IN EMBASSY JUDGMENT, IT ENTIRELY POSSIBLE SERIOUS TALKS TOOK PLACE CONCERNING POSSIBLE KUWAITI INVESTMENT IN FRENCH-LED URANIUM ENRICHMENT CONSORTIUM - AN AREA IN WHICH BOTH MINFIN AND MINISTER ELECTRICITY & WATER HAVE EXPRESSED INTEREST.

5. AS DESCRIBED REFTTEL, DISCUSSION POLITICAL AND ENERGY ISSUES APPARENTLY ALL BOILER-PLATE. PRIMARY FRENCH GOAL TALKS APPARENTLY WAS TO EXPAND ITS INFLUENCE IN AREA AND TO PROMOTE COMMERCIAL INTERESTS. EFFORTS TOWARD LATTER HAVE BECOME INCREASINGLY EVIDENT IN KUWAIT IN RECENT MONTHS. KUWAITI INTEREST WAS PRIMARILY IN KEEPING ITS OPTIONS OPEN AND SPREADING ITS MONEY. AMIR'S VISIT UNDOUBTEDLY MADE SOME MINOR CONTRIBUTION BUT WE SEE NO MAJOR SHIFT BY KUWAIT TOWARDS FRANCE RESULTING FROM EXCHANGE.

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